THE

# Moral and Religious Cabinet.

"To aid the cause of Virtue and Religion."

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*The Rev. Mr.* William Gilgrass, *a Missionary from the Methodist Connection in Great Britain to the West-Indies, who lately arrived in this city, has obligingly favoured the Editor with the follwing, extracted from his Journal.*

## A REMARKABLE MANIFESTATION OF GOSPEL GRACE.

*Jamaica, April* 29, 1807.

A FEW weeks ago, a coloured free man, by the name of Dixon, who, according to the custom of the county, was called a Crimp, in the habit of shiping sailors, one day, having been out on business, upon his return was asked by one of the sailors, "Have you seen the Captain?" he replied, "No." The sailor said, "You have not been looking for him." "Yes, I have," replied Dixon. "You are a d——d liar," said the sailor. "And you are a d——d liar," was Dixon's reply. Dixon immediately took up a thick stick and threw it at the sailor. The sailor said, "You have missed me." Dixon replied, "I will do for thee." He immediately run into the room, and brought out a loaded pistol, the contents of which lodged in the sail r's bowels, and proved the speedy harbinger of death. Dixon was apprehended, and put into prison. His trial commenced on the 20th—after a long investigation being found guilty, was condemned to be hanged, which execution took place on the above date.

It may be here necessary to inform the reader of Dixon's principles, which were those of a Deist. Before and after the murder he was not ashamed, with many hundreds more of that island, of professing a disbelief of all Revelation, Religion, and future rewards and punishments. He believed in one Supreme

Being, from a conviction that creation could not form itself, but a Supreme Power must be the original moving cause, which he called God. At the same time disbelieved that he took knowledge of the actions of the children of men—let them act as they please, they are unaccountable to God.

Jesus Christ he believed to be illegitemate, and an impostor, going about to deceive the weak and simple of the children of men.

The Christian Religion he despised, declaring all its professors madmen. This is the character professing Christians bear in that island; and the language of the wise, mighty, noble and strong, called *gentlemen*, is—"I wish they were all dead, and the devil had them."

On the 24th, four days after his condemnation, I visited him at two o'clock in the morning, previously acquainted with his principles—was determined to be faithful to him. I laid before him the fall of man, all partaking of corrupt nature, which carnal mind is enmity against God. Restoration by Jesus Christ—Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Also, the enormity of his late violation of the laws of God and his country, and how much better he would have been if he had enjoyed religion, which saves from all sin and its demerits. He hearkened attentively to all I said, but it seemed to have little or no effect.

Being under the necessity of leaving town, I saw him no more until the 28th, when I revisited him, and found him changed for the better. During my absence some of our friends visited him with great pleasure and satisfaction. Singing and prayer he now delighted in, which was continued almost without intermission.

When I began to talk about the goodness of God, and preciousness of Christ, and hope of eternal glory, his soul was filled with transports of heavenly joy. To do justice to the Grace

which wrought this marvellous change, I shall transmit his own words. "I feel not as I did before you visited me—then I was, I know not how; something within would not let me rest, particularly when I thought on death, not knowing where I must go, or how, and what I shall see after death. But now I feel easy in my mind—quite happy, even when I think of death." Here I asked him whether he knew his sins forgiven? His answer was: "Yes—I know God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven me all my sins, even the sin of murder. I am unworthy of all these mercies and blessings. I feel humble, and willing to die. I have killed the sailor, and deserve to die. I have nothing against those men who witnessed against me, for I deserve to die a public death."

Do you feel the Lord present? Are you afraid of the gallows? "I feel the Lord Jesus present with me: It appears as if I lay at his feet—He is like a man talking to me; for when I am locked up, and no human eye sees me, I lay talking to the Lord; and although I am so weak with confinement, and loaded with iron, I feel inwardly strong and healthy."

This being the night before his execution, I asked whethe he was afraid to be hung. He answered: "I wish it was to-night—I would rather die than live. If I live, it may be I should commit sin again; and I would rather die and go to Heaven."

Early next morning Mr. Bradnack and myself visited him, and found him happy. I prayed for him in the cell. Afterwards he said, "Are they not ready?" meaning the soldiers, &c. that attended him to the place of execution. Going along, he said to the crowd: "Open, that all may see me as I go along; that they may take warning by me." By the time he got to the gallows, being weak, he was much fatigued. After resting a little against the ladder, he said: "Let me speak to my brethren: "This day I warn you, whites, browns and blacks, to keep from all sin. You see what it has done for me—brought public

shame, contempt, and death itself. All this I deserve justly for shedding human blood. I die in peace with all men, with a confidence in Christ, that after I leave this world, I shall be forever happy with him."

I now kneeled down and prayed for him under the gallows—supposed to be present about four thousand spectators. My soul was very happy in prayer, as was his also. We shook hands together, he for eternity, and I for time—Death made the separation: But it will not be long, before I hope to meet him in the blood-washed throng upon the banks of eternal bliss.

Surely never man embraced death with more affection than Dixon. He leaped as it were with eagerness into its unsatiated jaws, in the triumph of evangelical and victorious faith in our dear Redeemer and Almighty Saviour.

*For the Moral and Religious Cabinet.*

## THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

O THOU immaculate Lamb of God! who hast tasted death for me, remember my soul in that important hour, when this drama of life shall close, and grant my sins forgiven.—Neither be unmindful holy Jesus! of my fellow creatures, the purchase of thine all-atoning merit; but have mercy on the whole human race, that when the grim tyrant death, who now marches through our land with awful strides, and crushes in his arms our feeble frames, shall cease to riot more in human blood, they may then be partakers of thy redeeming love;—and whilst the world is in flames beneath, arise to the grand architect of nature, who will repair the breaches of these earthly walls, and immortalize his own labors.

A sad, and awful truth!—A few short years, or days, or moments—is it possible? may end all time to me!—Soon will my daily sun be set to rise no more!—O earth, I feel thy weight!—

*For the Moral and Religious Cabinet.*

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## A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND HAPPY DEATH OF ABIGAIL BENSON,

*Who died Sunday, April 3, 1808, at 1 o'clock, A. M.*

THE parents of our deceased sister, Abigail Benson, were members of the Methodist Society, and resided in the state of New-Jersey, but died when she was quite young. She could recollect hearing the Methodist preachers at the house of her parents, and remembered the names of several of them. It appeared that she thought little about religion after the death of her parents, until sometime in the summer of 1806, when a prayer-meeting was held in a private house a few doors from her brother-in-law's, with whom she had resided a number of years. She said that she could hear the prayers from the window of the house where she lived, and at first made them the subject of her diversion. But was soon induced to come to the meeting, where the Lord convinced her of her lost and undone state without an interest in the Redeemer. Her conviction seemed to increase until the Jersey Camp-meeting, at Long-Hill, to which she went in company with a number of our friends from this city. There the Lord increased her distress, until she fell under the mighty power of God, and lay a considerable time insensible to all earthly things. The Lord here blessed her with his pardoning love, and filled her soul with peace and joy in believing. On her return she joined Society, and continued a humble persevering follower of the lowly Jesus.

Although she often mentioned her trials and difficulties, and her sore conflicts with the enemy of her soul, yet, in the strength of her blessed Master, she was enabled to overcome them all, and was often found rejoicing with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.

She was taken unwell on Monday the 28th of March last. Her situation was not thought to be dangerous until the last of the week, when the meazles unexpectedly made its appearance. She bore her affliction with the greatest patience and resignation. Although the physician who attended her, gave hopes of her recovery, yet she did not think she would survive, and expressed to her sister that she was willing to go, and that there was nothing here for which she desired to live.

A little before she expired she became somewhat restless, which alarmed her sister, and in a few moments, without a sigh or a groan, fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

On the Sunday afternoon following a funeral sermon was preached on the occasion in the Methodist Church in John-street, by the Rev. Phinehas Peck, from Jer. 28. 16 "This year thou shalt die." J. S.

## AN ANECDOTE OF BISHOP LATIMER.

HAVING one day preached before king Henry VIII. a sermon which displeased his majesty, he was ordered to preach again on the next Sunday, and to make an apology for the offence he had given. After naming his text, the good bishop thus began his sermon:——"Hugh Latimer, dost thou know to whom thou art this day to speak? To the high and mighty monarch, the king's most excellent majesty, who can take away thy life if thou offendest; therefore take heed that thou speakest not a word that may displease. But then consider well, Hugh, dost thou not know from whence thou comest, upon whose message thou art sent? Even by the great and mighty God, who is always all-present, and who beholdest all thy ways, and who is able to cast both body and soul into hell together; therefore take care and deliver thy message faithfully:"—and then proceeds with the same sermon he had preached the Sunday before, and confirms it with more energy.

The sermon being finished, the court was full of expectation to know what would be the fate of this honest, plain-dealing bishop. After dinner the king calls for Latimer, and, with a stern countenance, asked him, "How he durst be so bold as to preach in this manner?"—He, falling on his knees, replied, "That his duty to his God and to his prince had enforced him thereunto, and that he had merely discharged his duty and his conscience in what he had spoken, and that his life was in his majesty's hands." Upon this the king rose from his seat, and, taking the good man off his knees, embraced him in his arms, saying, "Blessed be God I have so honest a servant."

# Poetry.

## ON THE CLOSE OF LIFE.

THANKLESS for favours from on high,
Man thinks he fades too soon;
Tho' 'tis his privilege to die,
Would he improve the boon.

But he, not wise enough to scan
His best concerns aright,
Would gladly stretch life's little span
To ages,—if he might.

To ages,—in a world of pain!
To ages,—where he goes,
Call'd by Affliction's heavy chain,
And hopeless of repose!

Strange fondness of the human heart,
Enamour'd of its harm!
Strange world that costs it so much smart,
And yet has power to charm.

Whence has the world its magic power,
Why deem we death a foe?
Recoil from weary life's best hour,
And court a longer woe?

The cause is Conscience,—conscience oft
Her tale of guilt renews;
Her voice is terrible, tho' soft,
And dread of death ensues.

Then, anxious to be longer spar'd,
Man mourns his fleeting breath;
All evil then seems light, compar'd
With the approach of death.

'Tis Judgment shakes him,—there's the fear
That prompts his wish to stay;
He has incurr'd a long arrear,
And must despair to pay!

Pay! Follow Christ, and all is paid;
His death your peace insures:
Think on the grave where HE was laid,
And calm descend to your's.

AS many of our friends may be desirous of knowing when and where the Camp Meetings for the ensuing season are to be held, we have obtained the following which we are authorised to say is Authentic.

At Tuckehoe, on Tuesday, May 31.
At Cow Harbour, (*L. I.*) Tuesday, June 28.
On Staten Island, Tuesday, July 26.
At Stamford, (Conn.) Tuesday, August 9.
At Croton, Tuesday, September 13,
Each to continue 4 Days.

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